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Contact: Ari B. Adler
517-373-5886

Senate GOP Moves to Stop Rules Aimed at Penalizing Non-Union Businesses

*Sikkema: "Our economy can't stand anymore of this 'government is good,
businesses are bad' mentality"*

Lansing - Senate Republicans today initiated legislation to stop the Granholm administration from instituting administrative rules aimed at penalizing non-union businesses in Michigan.

"This is another example of the governor's administration finding new ways every day to scare job providers away from Michigan with unnecessary government regulations," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming.

Senate Bills 1026-1030 were prompted by a rule change being considered by the state Department of Human Services for 5,000 Adult Foster Care and Home for the Aged businesses. The rules establish onerous new regulations that can most easily be met by providing union representation for a facility's employees.

The Oakland Press editorialized on the issue, writing, "Let's call this what it is: a labor union getting a huge and cynical-seeming favor from a governor who's rightly worried about winning re-election."

"Ergonomics, union preference, unrealistic limits on forestry - these rules are starting to multiply," Sikkema said. "Our economy can't stand anymore of this 'government is good, businesses are bad' mentality."

One of the bills' primary sponsors, Sen. Bill Hardiman, agreed with Sikkema, saying he has been in contact with care providers who are worried about these new rules limiting choices for vulnerable citizens and driving up costs for families.

"The state should not be in the business of enforcing or encouraging unionization. This is not an anti-union issue," said Sen. Bill Hardiman, R-Kentwood. "Such an administrative barrier sends the wrong message to businesses. This is a blatant attempt to favor union shops or force others to unionize and we need to stop it. It's bad policy and over-regulation."

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